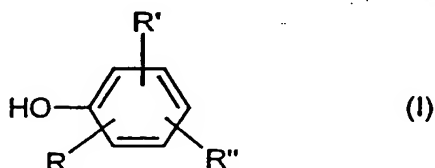


AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A solvent-free ~~Solvent-free~~, low-branching, thermoplastic, aromatic polycarbonates ~~prepared by the transesterification process~~ and having a weight-average molecular weights (M_w) of from 2000 to 150,000, ~~based on~~ and being prepared by melt transesterification of a composition comprising,

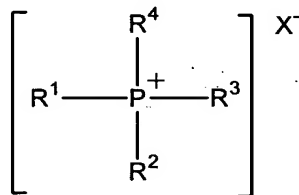
- (i) diphenols,
- (ii) chain terminators of formula (I)



wherein R, R' and R'' each independently of the others represent H, optionally branched C_1 - C_{34} -alkyl/cycloalkyl, C_7 - C_{34} -alkaryl or C_6 - C_{34} -aryl, and,

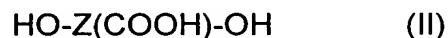
- (iii) optionally[,] branching agents,

wherein the transesterification process is performed in the presence of a catalyst represented by the following formula



for which R^1 , R^2 , R^3 and R^4 are each independently selected from the group consisting of C_1 - C_{18} -alkyl, C_6 - C_{14} -aryl, C_7 - C_{12} -aralkyl and C_5 - C_6 -cycloalkyl, and X^- is an anion selected from the group consisting of sulfate, hydrogen sulfate, hydrogen carbonate, carbonate, acetate, boranate, hydrogen

phosphate, halide, and an alcoholate of the formula OR⁵ wherein R⁵ is selected from C₆-C₁₄-aryl and C₇-C₁₂-aralkyl, and characterised in that further wherein after its total saponification the aromatic polycarbonate it contains less than 300 ppm, determined by HPLC, of elements conforming to formula (II)



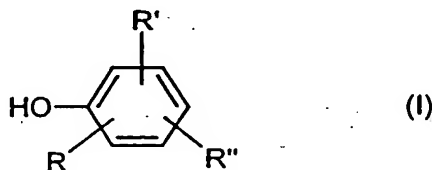
wherein Z is an aromatic radical having 6 to 30 carbon atoms and where the acid group is in the ortho position relative to a hydroxy group.

2. (Currently Amended) ~~Polycarbonates according to claim 1, characterised in that~~ The polycarbonate of Claim 1 wherein the end groups consist of alkylphenol end groups to the extent of more than 30% of the reacted end groups.

3. (Previously Presented) The polycarbonate according to Claim 1 wherein said elements are present in an amount of from 0.03 ppm to 250 ppm.

4. (Currently Amended) A process for the preparation of ~~the a~~ a low-branching polycarbonates ~~according to Claim 1 comprising transesterification in the presence of phosphonium salt catalyst~~ melt transesterifying a composition of,

- (i) diphenols,
- (ii) chain terminators of formula (I)

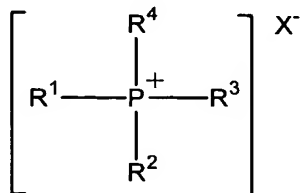


wherein R, R' and R'' each independently of the others represent H, optionally branched C₁-C₃₄-alkyl/cycloalkyl, C₇-C₃₄-alkaryl or C₆-C₃₄-aryl, and

(iii) optionally branching agents,

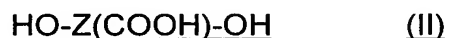
in the presence of

(iv) a catalyst represented by the following formula



for which R¹, R², R³ and R⁴ are each independently selected from the group consisting of C₁-C₁₈-alkyl, C₆-C₁₄-aryl, C₇-C₁₂-aralkyl and C₅-C₆-cycloalkyl, and X⁻ is an anion selected from the group consisting of sulfate, hydrogen sulfate, hydrogen carbonate, carbonate, acetate, boranate, hydrogen phosphate, halide, and an alcoholate of the formula OR⁵ wherein R⁵ is selected from C₆-C₁₄-aryl and C₇-C₁₂-aralkyl,

wherein after total saponification the aromatic polycarbonate contains less than 300 ppm, determined by HPLC, of elements conforming to formula (II)



wherein Z is an aromatic radical having 6 to 30 carbon atoms and where the acid group is in the ortho position relative to a hydroxy group.

5. (Currently Amended) ~~Process according to claim 4, in which~~ The process of Claim 4 wherein the catalyst is used in concentrations of from 10⁻² mol to 10⁻⁶ mol, based on 1 mol of diphenol.

6. (Previously Presented) The process according to Claim 4 wherein the catalyst is tetraphenylphosphonium phenolate.

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Previously Presented) A molded article comprising the polycarbonate of Claim 1.

9. (Currently Amended) The molded article of Claim 8 ~~characterized in that it~~ wherein the molded article is transparent.

10. (Currently Amended) The molded article of Claim 8 selected from the group consisting of data stores, audio compact disks, sheets, multi-wall sheets, films, lamp housings, panes, headlamp lenses, and structural elements.

11. (New) The polycarbonate of Claim 1 wherein the catalyst is tetraphenylphosphonium phenolate.